

## Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-06

INFO OCT-01 SSO-00 ISO-00 SS-15 NASA-01 CCO-00 NSC-05

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DRAFTED BY AF/E:WBCOOTE:SEH

APPROVED BY AF :JJBLAKE

S/S: -PSHANKLE

NASA:MR.DOYLE

S:LPBREMER

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 162964 TOSEC 060075

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:PFOR, OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.) NASA, US; MA

SUBJECT:CLOSURE OF NASA STATION IN MADAGASCAR

MALAGASY PRESIDENT RATSIRAKA INFORMED OUR CHARGE TODAY THAT THE NASA TRACKING STATION IN MADAGASCAR WILL HAVE TO CLOSE DOWN WITHIN ONE WEEK. HE TOOK THIS ACTION UPON HEARING FROM CHARGE THAT NASA WOULD NOT AND COULD NOT MEET RATSIRAKA'S DEMAND FOR \$10 MILLION IN BACK RENT.

2. UPON LEARNING OF RATSIRAKA'S DECISION NASA ISSUED INSTRUCTIONS TO STATION COMMANDER THROUGH ITS VOICE LINK WITH THE STATION TO COMMENCE CLOSEDOWN AND BE NON-FUNCTIONAL BY JULY 14. NASA HAS INFORMED DEPT. THAT STATION IS NOT ESSENTIAL AND THAT BACKUP SYSTEMS WILL BE USED TO SUPPORT UPCOMING LAUNCHES, INCLUDING APOLLO-SOYUZ LAUNCH. INSTRUCTIONS TO CHARGE FOR HIS TALK WITH RATSIRAKA SPECIFICALLY

DIRECTED HIM TO MAKE POINT THAT STATION WAS QUOTE NON-ESSENTIAL UNQUOTE LEST RATSIRAKA HAVE ANY ILLUSIONS US  
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WOULD PAY UP RATHER THAN LOSE STATION BEFORE APOLLO-SOYUZ

FLIGHT JULY 15.

3. RATSIRAKA'S ACTIONS ARE CONSISTENT WITH THE STRONG  
NON-ALIGNED POSITION THAT HE DEVELOPED AS FOREIGN  
MINISTER IN RAMANANTSOA GOVERNMENT (1972-1974). DURING  
THAT PERIOD HE FORCED THE CLOSING OF THE FRENCH AIR BASE  
NEAR TANANARIVE AND THE FRENCH NAVAL BASE AT DIEGO SUAREZ.  
RATSIRAKA ALSO CLOSED MALAGASY PORTS TO ALL FOREIGN NAVAL  
VESSELS. IN VIEW RATSIRAKA'S PAST RECORD IT IS DOUBTFUL  
THAT EVEN THE PAYMENT OF THE TEN MILLION DOLLARS DEMANDED  
WOULD HAVE SECURED THE FUTURE OF THE STATION.  
NEITHER DEPARTMENT NOR NASA HAS ANY RECORD OF ANY  
SUGGESTION EVER HAVING BEEN MADE TO RATSIRAKA THAT U.S.  
WOULD PAY BACK RENT TO 1963 AS HE DEMANDED,  
NOTWITHSTANDING HIS ASSERTIONS IN THIS REGARD. SIMILARLY,  
WE ARE NOT AWARE ANY BASIS FOR HIS ASSERTION THAT HE  
WAS MISLED REGARDING SECRETARY'S PRESENCE AND  
AVAILABILITY FOR MEETING IN NEW YORK AT GA LAST YEAR.  
INGERSOLL

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